

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT WELL RECEIVED IN ROME

EMBASSY ROME CONSIDERS VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE'S VISIT AN UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS, WITH POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SCENE AND US POLICY INTERESTS IN EVERY MEASURABLE ASPECT. THE ITALIANS PROBABLY APPRECIATED MOST THE MESSAGE THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION INTENDS TO USHER IN A NEW ERA OF INTENSIFIED COOPERATION AND CONSULTATION WITH OUR EUROPEAN ALLIES. TAKING UP THIS CUE, THE GOI SOUGHT US SUPPORT FOR ITS QUEST FOR AN IMF LOAN. DESPITE SOME SPECULATION THAT THE VISIT SIGNED A CHANGE IN US
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POLICY TOWARDS EVENTUAL COMMUNIST ENTRY INTO AN ITALIAN GOVERNMENT, THE ITALIAN PRESS WAS SURPRISINGLY RESTRAINED, AND EMPHASIZED INSTEAD THE VICE PRESIDENT'S PRAISE AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT. THE EMBASSY CONCLUDES THAT THE IMAGE PROJECTED DURING THE VISIT SIGNIFICANTLY AIDED THE PURSUIT OF US INTERESTS THERE.
(CONFIDENTIAL) ROME 1486, 1/28.)

2. YUGOSLAVIA: FEW AFTERSHOCKS FROM BIJEDIC'S DEATH

EMBASSY BELGRADE BELIEVES THE PASSING OF PRIME MINISTER BIJEDIC IS UNLIKELY TO CAUSE MAJOR UPHEAVALS IN YUGOSLAV POLITICS SINCE:

--THE OFFICE OF PRIME MINISTER IS LESS INFLUENTIAL IN YUGOSLAVIA THAN ELSEWHERE; AND

--BIJEDIC HIMSELF WAS NOT A POWERFUL FIGURE.

HOWEVER, THE EMBASSY OBSERVES THAT BIJEDIC'S DEATH WILL PROBABLY INTENSIFY THE MANEUVERING NOW GOING ON FOR THE MANY TOP POLITICAL POSITIONS DUE TO CHANGE HANDS IN 1978. THIS PROCESS IS ALREADY COMPLICATED BY THE NEED TO MAINTAIN STRICT NATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS BALANCE IN THE HIERARCHY. (CONFIDENTIAL) BELGRADE 524, 1/28.)

3. INNER-GERMAN RELATIONS TURN CHILLY OVER EMIGRATION ISSUE

THE CHIEF OF WEST GERMANY'S PERMANENT MISSION TO THE GDR, GUENTHER GAUS, EXPRESSED TO EMBASSY BERLIN HIS VIEW THAT PROGRESS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST GERMANY ON HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY IN THE NEAR FUTURE. GAUS SAID THE GDR IS WORRIED ABOUT EMIGRATION AND IS STEPPING UP ATTACKS ON THE PERMANENT MISSION'S RIGHT TO DISCUSS REUNIFICATION OF FAMILIES WITH GDR CITIZENS.

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ALTHOUGH GENERALLY PESSIMISTIC CONCERNING THE PRESENT STATE OF FRG/GDR RELATIONS, GAUS SAID IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO PROCEED WITH THE FRG/GDR BORDER TREATY. SUCH A TREATY, HOWEVER, WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO SELL TO THE WEST GERMAN PUBLIC IF IT LACKED A HUMANITARIAN COMPONENT. (CONFIDENTIAL) BERLIN 5182 (LIMDIS), 1/28.)

4. BELGIANS WEIGH COST OF ZAIRE'S FRIENDSHIP

ZAIRE PRESIDENT MOBUTU HAS CONCLUDED A VISIT TO BELGIUM IN WHICH HE REPORTEDLY SOUGHT AN END TO BELGIAN-ZAIREAN ESTRANGEMENT AND A MASSIVE INCREASE IN BELGIAN AID. EMBASSY BRUSSELS REPORTS THAT MOBUTU'S AID REQUEST OCCASIONED A DEBATE WITHIN THE GOB OVER MOBUTU'S ABILITY TO HANDLE ZAIRE'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS, WITH FOREIGN MINISTER VAN ELSLANDE QUESTIONING WHETHER A MAJOR INVESTMENT WAS NOT AN EXPENSIVE WASTE. PRIVATE BELGIAN INVESTORS WERE EQUALLY SKEPTICAL ABOUT RISKING NEW CAPITAL IN ZAIRE.

ACCORDING TO THE EMBASSY, THE GOB HAS CONCLUDED THAT WHILE IT CANNOT AFFORD TO COLD-SHOULDER MOBUTU'S OFFER OF RENEWED FRIENDSHIP, THE NEW RELATIONSHIP WILL BE MANAGED ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS WITH A CLOSE LOOK "AT THE BOTTOM LINE."
(CONFIDENTIAL) BRUSSELS 887, 1/28.)

5. PROSPECTIVE ARAB LOANS TO SPAIN

A COMMERCIAL BANK SOURCE TOLD EMBASSY MADRID THAT SPAIN HAS RECEIVED FIRM COMMITMENTS FROM SAUDI ARABIA FOR LOANS TOTALLING \$1 BILLION IN 1977, AND MIGHT ALSO RECEIVE LOANS FROM KUWAIT AND THE UAE. ACCORDING TO THE SOURCE, THE COMMITMENTS WERE OBTAINED BY KING JUAN CARLOS' PERSONAL ENVOYS, THE COUNT OF BARCELONA AND THE DUKE OF BADAJOZ. ALTHOUGH THE COMMITMENTS ARE ONLY VERBAL, THEY ARE CONSIDERED FIRM BY THE KING.
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EMBASSY COMMENT: WITH A CURRENT ACCOUNT DEFICIT OF \$4 BILLION AND LITTLE PROSPECT OF CORRECTING IT SOON, SPAIN CERTAINLY CAN USE THE LOANS. WE UNDERSTAND THE KING HAS PLANS TO VISIT SAUDI ARABIA AND POSSIBLY KUWAIT. (CONFIDENTIAL)
MADRID 682, 1/27.)
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